

SUGGESTIONS AND DEBATES

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THE NATIONAL INTEGRATION OF EUROPEAN WORKING CLASSES (1871-1914)

Exploring the Causal Configuration*

SUMMARY: Seven factors that may have contributed to the national integration of the working classes in Britain, France, Germany, Italy, and Russia 1871-1914 are explored: the national process of capital accumulation, the international prestige of the nation, the coming of interregional connections, compulsory education, suffrage, the role of the army, and the introduction of social insurance systems. The (provisional) results of this exploration show a clustering of integration-promoting factors in Britain, Germany and France, which is to a certain extent lacking in Italy and Russia.

Much has been written about the diverging responses of European working-class leaders to the outbreak of the First World War. We have a detailed knowledge of how German, French and British Socialists willingly participated in the military efforts of their governments, how in Russia the delegates of the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks left the Duma under protest when they were informed that their country had joined the conflict, and how the Italian party paper *Avanti!* welcomed the behaviour of the Russian comrades.

This was not the only occasion that parts of the European left responded differently to political structures and developments. The German SPD, for instance, consciously renounced party-agitation in the army. August Bebel, in a *Reichstag*-speech in 1898, even said that he would dissociate himself from every party-member campaigning in the army.¹ On the other hand, the Russian Mensheviks and Bolsheviks agitated quite energetically among the tsarist troops.² The revolutionary-syndicalist CGT was active in the

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¹ *Verhandlungen des Reichstags. Stenographische Berichte.* 9. Legislaturperiode, 5. Session. Band II, pp. 1120f.

² “It has been calculated that there were twenty-seven Social-Democratic organizations in the army in 1905, while more than double that number of civilian party committees or groups disseminated propaganda among the troops.” – J.H.L. Keep, *The Rise of Social Democrats in*

French army, but her famous initiatives, like the *Sous du Soldat*, had no subversive intentions at all.³

In colonial matters the German, French and British Social Democrats adopted a “moderate” attitude. But the Italian Socialist Party – despite its discord and drifting policies – declared a general strike when the Libyan war was started.

The information available about working-class organizations in the decades before the Great War makes it possible to envisage a continuum with two extremes: identification and non-identification with the nation-state. The German and British Social Democrats are relatively near to the one pole, and the Russians near to the other. The French and Italian parties can be situated in between, the first close to the German/British side and the second close to the Russian side.

It is difficult to say with any accuracy in what measure the behaviour of party leaders reflected the opinion of the rank-and-file of their organizations and of the working-classes at large. Despite the scarcity of historical work on this question we may suppose that the attitudes of the rank-and-file did not always correspond to the attitudes of the leaderships. The Italian “general strike” of 1911 certainly was not a complete success. And the intransigence of the Russian Socialists presented a significant contrast with the war enthusiasm shown by many workers in Petrograd. The sudden patriotism of the SPD-leadership in 1914 on the other hand met with anti-militarist protests in Württemberg, Berlin and elsewhere.

In this paper I want to reflect upon the (non) integration of the British, German, French, Italian and Russian working classes in general during the period 1871-1914. Because there is almost no *direct* access to workers’ consciousness in those years (for example, through interviews with contemporaries) we have to use *indirect* methods. Two approaches can be discerned:

(i) The first and obvious one uses the material produced by workers and their organizations themselves (voting behaviour, party membership, trade-union membership, strike behaviour, reading behaviour, songs). The correct interpretation of this material is extremely difficult,⁴ but nevertheless had some important success.

(ii) The second one analyses the dominating structures and ruling institutions which (could) have contributed to the integration of working classes. This approach links up with integration-theories in sociology and

Russia (Oxford, 1963), p. 272.

³ Jacques Julliard, “La C.G.T. devant la guerre (1900-1914)”, *Le Mouvement Social*, no 49 (1964).

⁴ Dick Geary, “Identifying Militancy: the Assessment of Working-Class Attitudes towards State and Society”, in Richard J. Evans (ed.), *The German Working Class 1888-1933. The Politics of Everyday Life* (London and Totowa, 1982).

political science. Departing from the development of societies as wholes it should be possible to present hypotheses about the (non)integration of working classes. This second approach might supplement the first and result in a better understanding of the relationship between party leaderships and classes. In this paper I want to explore some of its possibilities.

Karl W. Deutsch once defined “integration” as “making a whole out of the previously separate components [of a human community]”.⁵ Functionalist social scientists seem to conceive of this “making a whole” too much as a consensual, non-violent process,⁶ which is almost exclusively seen “from above”, through the eyes of “the system”.⁷ Perhaps it is advisable to strip the concept of this functionalist connotation.

A useful first approximation has recently been given by Victoria Bonnell, when she wrote:

I am using the term to denote the state of mind shared by a group of people who feel at least minimal attachment to certain hegemonic institutions (political, economic, social, cultural) and who are willing to accept the existing ground rules for their continuation (possibly in some modified form). The notion of “integration” serves to draw our attention to the circumstances that have induced workers to accept or reject established arrangements.⁸

This characterization roughly indicates the direction in which our thoughts should go, although certain questions remain: what precisely are these “hegemonic institutions” to which the “minimal attachment” relates? What exactly are the “existing ground rules”? And where does the boundary lie between modification and rejection of these rules?

Let’s start with the “hegemonic institutions”. The most important ones seem to be (i) the *state*, which consists of at least four apparatuses: the apparatus of violence (army, police); the legislature; the power centre which directs the state (e.g., the autocrat, parliament); and the financial

⁵ Karl W. Deutsch, “Integration and Autonomy: Some Concepts and Ideas”, *Ekistics*, no 179 (1970), p. 327. Almost the same definition is given by Robert Cooley Angell: “Social integration is [. . .] the fitting together of the parts of a social system to constitute a whole.” (“Social Integration”, in David L. Sills (ed.), *International Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, VII (1968), p. 380).

⁶ Robert L. Pfalzgraff, “Karl Deutsch and the Study of Political Science”, *Political Science Reviewer*, II (Fall 1972), pp. 105-106.

⁷ This is, for instance, very clear in Myron Weiner’s well-known article “Political Integration and Political Development”, *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, no 358 (March 1965), where forms of political integration are studied as “strategies pursued by governments”.

⁸ Victoria E. Bonnell, “Trade Unions, Parties, and the State in Tsarist Russia: A Study of Labor Politics in St. Petersburg and Moscow”, *Politics and Society*, 9 (1980), p. 320.

apparatus (taxes etc.) which constitutes the material basis of the other parts of the state, and of course, (ii) the *capitalist economy*, or, more specifically: the commodity character of the means of production with its logical results (competition, profit maximization etc.).

“Existing ground rules” would then be those required patterns of behaviour which legitimize and support the “hegemonic institutions”. For instance: the duty of all citizens to obey existing laws and to strive for changes of these laws in a legal way; the right (and duty) of the state to monopolize the means of violence; the right (and duty) of the power centre to manage the state; the duty to pay taxes; the right (and duty) of capitalists to make profits. “Modification” – as distinct from rejection – of these ground rules should then mean the changing of rules while maintaining their essence (for example: the right of US-citizens to have a gun for self-defence is a modification and not a rejection of a ground rule (state-monopoly of the means of violence)).

We can now say, on the basis of these descriptions, that a working class is completely integrated if it accepts all hegemonic institutions and the essence of their ground rules. The other way round, it can be said that a working class is completely unintegrated if it rejects all hegemonic institutions and the essence of all their ground rules. This definition takes into account historical research on the subject: resistance against (important) parts of a national system does not mean the rejection of the system as such.⁹

Non-integration can have two “ideal-typical” forms. The first one is the *internationalist* non-integration deriving from conscious attempts of (parts of) a working class to overcome the limitations of the nation-state. In this case workers are prepared to break the law, to arm themselves, to form organs of direct democracy, and to replace the capitalist economy by a consciously regulated one. The second form of non-integration can be called *pre-national* non-integration, and refers to (parts of) a working class living and thinking only in the small world of their locality or region. The analytical relevance of this second form is sometimes underestimated. Ashworth rightly remarked that “far into the nineteenth century, even in the countries economically most advanced, it was common place outside the few large towns for people from the next county to be regarded as, in

⁹ Compare the following observation about France: “The attitude of the socialists (and anarchists) towards the army was to a large extent determined by the fact that the army had been employed to break strikes, by its being used as a weapon of social oppression. The anti-militarist tradition, therefore, was strong and particularly so among the trade unions. But this anti-militarism was not necessarily the same as internationalism. Hatred of the army and anti-militarism could well be combined with the idea of the defence of the nation through popular militias [. . .]” – John Schwarzmantel, “Nationalism and the French Working Class”, in Eric Cahm and Jean Claude Fišera (eds), *Socialism and Nationalism in Contemporary Europe (1848-1945)*, vol. 2 (Nottingham, 1979), pp. 75-76.

some importance sense, ‘foreigners’”.¹⁰ This regionalism – which, by the way, can be very well combined with loyalty to the monarch – might promote as well as hamper national integration. If a government succeeds in the transformation of loyalty to a region (*Heimat*) into loyalty to the nation-state national integration is strengthened.¹¹ This, according to Cunow, was the case in Germany during the First World War:

Bei einem grossen Teil derer, die im Felde tapfer stritten, war es gar nicht in erster Reihe das Nationalgefühl, das sie bewegte, nämlich das Gefühl des Verbundenseins mit *der ganzen Nation und ihrem Schicksal, sondern vielmehr das Heimatgefühl*, d.h. das weit engere Gefühl des Verbundenseins mit einem bestimmten Heimatbezirk und seiner Bewohnerschaft.¹²

If on the other hand, regional peculiarities were suppressed by the nation-state, the result could be strong opposition to integration, as was the case in southern Italy and southern France.

In what follows I will discuss several societal factors that – according to the “common sense” of historians, political scientists and sociologists – may have contributed to working-class integration. In doing so I will restrict myself to the relatively short period 1871–1914, although I am aware of the danger this involves because long-term influences (such as, for instance, Republican traditions in the French case) will get insufficient attention. But this paper is intended as a first and preliminary contribution. Its only aim is to discuss some factors that *perhaps* have fulfilled a role in the process of working-class integration and to establish in a very rough way their explanatory potential.

After having discussed these factors separately, I will try to give a provisional synthesis.

I. A first important factor might be the *national process of capital accumulation*. Two aspects of this factor have a direct bearing on our subject.

(i) The *timing* of the process of accumulation: what was the stage of industrialization reached during the period under consideration? Did modern industry already have a firm basis in the national economy or was it still trying to take root? The early years of capitalist development, when a

¹⁰ W. Ashworth, “Industrialization and the Economic Integration of Nineteenth-Century Europe”, *European Studies Review*, 4 (1974), p. 292.

¹¹ This transfer of loyalties is accompanied by a loss of emotion. “On évoque volontiers ‘l’amour de la patrie’ – mais jamais l’amour de la nation, on parle facilement de ‘ma patrie’ – mais qui dira: ‘ma nation’?” – Jean-Yves Guimar, *L’idéologie nationale. Nation, Représentation, Propriété* (Paris, 1974), p. 31.

¹² Heinrich Cunow, *Die Marxsche Geschichts-, Gesellschafts- und Staatstheorie. Grundzüge einer Marxschen Soziologie*, Band II (Berlin, 1921), p. 31. See also Robert Michels, “Vaterlandsliebe und Heimatgefühl”, *Kölner Vierteljahrshefte für Soziologie*, 6 (1927).

feudal and agricultural society is transformed more or less rapidly, create enormous strains and discontents.¹³ After some time the new system of production and distribution consolidates itself and the new working class is permanently integrated as far as the *productive* sphere is concerned. From then on resistance is no longer directed against industrial society as such, but against (the consequences of) its capitalist nature.

An indication of the stages of industrial development in the five countries is given in table 1.

Table 1: Per capita volume of industrial production (United Kingdom in 1900 = 100)

	1800	1860	1913
Great Britain	16	64	115
Germany	8	15	85
France	9	20	59
Italy	8	10	26
Russia	6	8	20

Source: Paul Bairoch, "International Industrialization Levels from 1750 to 1980", *Journal of European Economic History*, vol. 11, no 2 (Spring 1982), p. 281.

It can be seen that the United Kingdom, Germany and, to a lesser extent, France were industrialized countries by 1913, while Italy and Russia were just experiencing their "take-off". This seems to imply that the working classes in the first three countries were better integrated in the productive sphere than in the last two countries.¹⁴

(ii) The *profitability* of the process of accumulation related to real wages. Workers do have a fundamental interest in the prosperity of "their" capitalists – at least as long as the system is relatively stable. "If capitalists do not appropriate profit, if they do not exploit, production falls, consumption decreases, and no other group can satisfy its material needs. Current realization of material interests of capitalists is a necessary condition for the

¹³ Mancur Olson, "Rapid Growth as a Destabilizing Force", *Journal of Economic History*, 23 (1963).

¹⁴ In the Italian case this not only meant the poor *attitudinal* integration of workers in the new manufactures and industries, but also the existence of a large group of people, displaced by modernization in agriculture, who were *in fact* not absorbed in the new industries. The result: "Trade unionism in other European countries was almost exclusively an urban industrial phenomenon. By contrast, the Italian labor movement was strongly rooted in both town and country, a development related to the fact that most uprooted workers remained in agriculture." – Samuel J. Surace, *Ideology, Economic Change, and the Working Classes: The Case of Italy* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1966), p. 68.

future realization of material interests of any group under capitalism.”¹⁵ In this sense workers will identify themselves with capitalists.¹⁶ However, successful accumulation of capital does not automatically imply working class integration in the sphere of *consumption*. In this respect economic growth is a necessary, but not a sufficient condition. Two other conditions should also be met. Firstly, the possibility of sharing in the fruits of prosperity is important, especially when workers have started to build trade-union organizations. The relevance of this point can be clearly seen in Russia: the growth of working-class militancy during the years immediately preceding the First World War was a consequence of the fact that “government and employer policies and actions combined to block workers from making concrete gains while simultaneously providing a limited and deceptively auspicious opportunity for collective organization. Consequently, unionized workers became aware of their organizational potential without, however, benefiting from it in any way. This served to undermine their willingness to pursue a gradualist approach while fortifying the belief in militant action.”¹⁷ But even the achievement of material gain is not enough to ensure an integrating effect. Of importance is also the relationship between these gains and the general development of the economy. The “consciousness effect” of wage increases is determined in a decisive way by the working-class perception of overall growth. If workers get the impression that the national economy is going through a period of strong growth from which they do not benefit sufficiently, then militancy will probably be stimulated.¹⁸

Despite the scarcity of reliable figures we may surmise with some certainty that there was no continuous wage increase in any of the five countries in the period leading up to 1914. Apparently wages increased from about 1890 to about 1900 and then either stagnated or dropped.¹⁹ Consequently one

¹⁵ Adam Przeworski, *Capitalism and Social Democracy* (Cambridge and Paris, 1985), pp. 138-139.

¹⁶ Socialist and Syndicalist workers have a second reason for preferring a quick accumulation of capital: it increases the number of workers and in that way the potential of the anti-capitalist forces. Illustrative is Griffuelhes' complaint about the slackness of French capitalists: “Pour notre part, nous demandons que le patronat français ressemble au patronat américain, et qu'ainsi, notre activité industrielle et commerciale grandissant, il en résulte pour nous une sécurité, une certitude qui, en nous élevant matériellement, nous entraîne pour la lutte, facilitée par le besoin de la main-d'oeuvre. Nous désirons un pays affairé, actif, bourdonnant, véritable ruche toujours en éveil. Notre force en sera accrue.” – Victor Griffuelhes, “L'infériorité des capitalistes français”, *Mouvement Socialiste*, no 226 (December 1910), p. 332.

¹⁷ Bonnell, “Trade Unions, Parties, and the State”, pp. 318-319.

¹⁸ Detlev Lehnert, “Zur politischen Transformation der deutschen Sozialdemokratie. Ein Interpretationsversuch für die Zeit des Übergangs zum Organisierten Kapitalismus”, in Jürgen Bergmann *et al.* (eds), *Geschichte als politische Wissenschaft* (Stuttgart, 1979), p. 289.

¹⁹ This was the thesis advanced in Otto Bauer, “Die Teuerung” [Report to the International Socialist Congress, Vienna, 23-29 August 1914], published in Georges Haupt, *Der Kongress fand nicht statt. Die Sozialistische Internationale 1914* (Vienna etc., 1967), pp. 227-256.

can suspect that, as far as consumption is concerned, there was no integration in any of the countries concerned. This observation is confirmed by the European strike waves during the years preceding the Great War.²⁰

II. The *international prestige* of a country is in many ways related to the first factor. If one can say that the workers living in capitals dispose of a certain “hegemonic impulse” extending to the nation as a whole,²¹ then it is also possible to assume that workers living in a prestigious, economically and politically powerful nation-state, will feel a certain “hegemonic impulse” on an international scale. In this way an indirect identification of (parts of) the working class with the nation-state emerges.²²

The connection is particularly clear in colonial matters. Our knowledge about working-class attitudes regarding colonies is small,²³ but the little we know suggests that *if* workers had opinions on this matter they often identified themselves to some extent with the “educational” tasks of their national elites in the peripheral world.²⁴

Besides, we shall have to admit, even if we do not adhere to the theory of labour aristocracies, that parts of the working classes may have profited directly from imperialism. This seems to apply, for example, to the textile

²⁰ Friedhelm Boll, “Streikwellen im europäischen Vergleich”, in Wolfgang J. Mommsen and Hans-Gerhard Husung (eds), *Auf dem Wege zur Massengewerkschaft. Die Entwicklung der Gewerkschaften in Deutschland und Grossbritannien 1880-1914* (Stuttgart, 1984), p. 112, signals the following “high points of national strike waves” between 1910 and 1914: France 1910 and 1911, Britain 1910 and 1913, German Empire 1910 and 1912, Italy 1911, and Russia 1912 and 1914.

²¹ Victor Kiernan, “Victorian London: unending purgatory”, *New Left Review*, no 76 (November-December 1972), p. 81.

²² An interesting example of this correlation between national prestige and “hegemonic impulse” has been given by Lorwin: “In the course of their national and international activities, the German socialists could not but become aware of the fact that their own successes were concomitant with the rise of the German Imperial State. [. . .] To put it paradoxically, the prestige and success of German labor and of German socialism were intertwined with, and dependent on, the success and prestige of the German Empire.” – Lewis L. Lorwin, *Labor and Internationalism* (New York, 1929), pp. 142-143.

²³ “If they [the workers] had strong feelings, one way or the other, they, unlike the loquacious educated classes, were silent about them.” – Victor Kiernan, “Preface to the Penguin Edition”, in *The Lords of Human Kind. European attitudes to the outside world* (Harmondsworth, 1972), p. xxi. Also on this problem: Geoff Eley, “Social Imperialism in Germany. Reformist Synthesis or Reactionary Sleight of Hand?”, in Joachim Radkau and Imanuel Geiss (eds), *Imperialismus im 20. Jahrhundert. Gedenkschrift für George W.F. Hallgarten* (Munich, 1976). A rare attempt to overcome the analytical difficulties is Richard Price, *An Imperial War and the British Working Class. Working-Class Attitudes and Reactions to the Boer War 1899-1902* (London, 1972).

²⁴ Bédarida writes about “the superiority complex which they [the French workers] experienced in relation to those peoples considered as inferior and primitive.” – François Bédarida, “The French Working-Class Movement and Colonial Expansion – A Reappraisal”, *Bulletin of*

workers in Lancashire and Scotland, and the metal workers in Birmingham and Sheffield.²⁵

It is obvious, that colonial power did not exactly reflect general economic and political power. Germany in particular was a great power but as a late-comer on the colonial scene it possessed only a relatively small overseas empire. Russia on the other hand disposed of an enormous mass of colonial areas, but these were not colonies in the modern sense and, therefore, can only with many qualifications be considered as an indication of power within the world system.²⁶

All in all we may conclude that one nation-state (Italy) had little international prestige, while the other four countries could all in some sense be considered as important empires.

III. The coming of *interregional connections* may have strongly furthered national integration in general and working-class integration in particular. Before the coming of the train (and later: the automobile) contacts between the capital, other towns and the countryside were minimal. With the exception of regions along coasts and rivers everyday transport and communications did not reach further than twenty, thirty, or perhaps forty kilometers. The railways and the roads leading to the railway stations meant a drastic change. They brought, in Eugen Weber's words, "the isolated patches of the countryside out of their autarky – cultural as well as economic – into the market economy and the modern world".²⁷

the Society for the Study of Labour History, no 19 (1969), p. 5. Some information on the attitudes of British workers toward colonialism is contained in Dave Russell, *Popular Music in England 1840-1914* (Manchester, 1987), pp. 112-130, 275-278. On Germany see Gottfried Mergner, "Solidarität mit den 'Wilden'? Das Verhältnis der deutschen Sozialdemokratie zu den afrikanischen Widerstandskämpfern in den ehemaligen deutschen Kolonien um die Jahrhundertwende", in Frits van Holthoorn and Marcel van der Linden (eds), *Internationalism in the Labour Movement 1830-1940* (Leiden, 1988), vol. I.

As is well-known, the national elites tried to use these colonialist sentiments in their social-imperialist policies. For instance, Disraeli at the time of the extension of the franchise in the Second Reform Act deliberately invoked these sentiments to distract attention from growing class conflicts in his own country. See Freda Harcourt, "Disraeli's Imperialism, 1866-1868", *Historical Journal*, 23 (1980). Similar things could be said about the Mexican adventure of Napoleon III or Bismarck's policies.

²⁵ M. E. Chamberlain, "Imperialism and Social Reform", in C. C. Eldridge (ed.), *British Imperialism in the Nineteenth Century* (London and Basingstoke, 1984), pp. 159-160.

²⁶ In 1909-10, Britain possessed an overseas area of 29,122,149 square kilometers with 351,268,761 inhabitants; France: 6,835,727 km² (39,659,758 inh.); Germany: 2,657,204 km² (10,801,200 inh.); and Italy: 454,650 km² (679,551 inh.). – G. Zöpfl, "Kolonien und Kolonialpolitik", *Handwörterbuch der Staatswissenschaften*, vol. V (Jena, 1910), pp. 1026-1031. Russia, of course, had no overseas colonies.

²⁷ Eugen Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen. The Modernization of Rural France* (Stanford, Cal., 1976), p. 206.

The pace of railway construction depended, of course, on economic and military interests – and on the financial means the builders succeeded in collecting nationally and internationally. Around the turn of the century Russia already had the most extensive railroad-system in Europe. But the area which had to be covered was also by far the largest of all countries. In a comparative perspective it seems useful to relate the length of railroad-systems to the number of inhabitants, in order to give a rough indication of the impact the transport revolution had on the countryside. As can be seen in Table 2 Great Britain, France and Germany were by this standard way ahead of Italy and Russia.

Table 2: Railroads in kilometers per million inhabitants

	1870-71	1890-91	1910-11
Great Britain	826.0	840.7	788.8
Germany	462.6	867.8	943.1
France	430.6	868.9	1022.3
Italy	239.9	449.8	521.3
Russia	127.0	259.7	414.3

Source: Calculation by the author, based on B.R. Mitchell, "Statistischer Anhang", in Carlo M. Cipolla and K. Borchard (eds), *Die Entwicklung der industriellen Gesellschaften* (Stuttgart 1977), pp. 489 and 514.

In the wake of the transport revolution written communication was facilitated, especially after the system of prepayment of letters by relatively cheap postage stamps had been introduced.²⁸ The improvement of transport as well as communication facilities must have promoted the genesis of a national identity. Markets expanded, people from different parts of the nation-state were put in touch with each other, the culture and politics of big cities spread over the whole country, the construction of national organizations and mass media became possible, and, above all, the idea that all citizens are subjects of the same state became generally accepted.

IV. *Compulsory education* has progressively been introduced in all developed capitalist societies, after a certain industrial level had been reached.²⁹

²⁸ The importance of this innovation has escaped the attention of most social historians. See, however, Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen*, pp. 219-220, and especially David Vincent, "Communication, Community and the State", in Clive Elmsley and James Walvin (eds), *Artisans, Peasants and Proletarians, 1760-1860. Essays presented to Gwyn A. Williams* (London, 1985).

²⁹ Industrialization was a necessary condition for the introduction of generalized compulsory education because the withdrawal from the labour process during 5 to 7 years of all children

Military, economic and political factors played a role in this, sometimes combined, sometimes separately.³⁰ After a while the competition between states and national economies ensured that this innovation was widely introduced.

After the German unification in 1871 the old Prussian laws regarding compulsory education were introduced in the whole German Empire.³¹ Scotland introduced compulsory education in 1872 (England and Wales followed in 1889), France did the same in 1882.³² After the formal acceptance of the laws it took some time before all the children of these countries in fact attended elementary schools. Officially Italy also knew a system of compulsory education but this remained partly ineffective.³³ In Russia no general system of compulsory education became effective until after the October Revolution. It is true that the reforms of 1864 installed *zemstvos* (elective county councils) with educational tasks; but overall enrolment in primary schools increased only very slowly afterwards. The revolution of 1905 brought a qualitative leap, but even then no more than about fifty percent of the separate age groups went to elementary schools.³⁴

Considering these facts it comes as no surprise that in 1914 nearly a hundred per cent of all Prussian, French and British brides and bridegrooms were able to write, while the rate of literacy in Italy and Russia was much lower. At the outbreak of the First World War less than half of all Italian children of school-going age actually attended schools.³⁵ Concerning Russia it has been said that

the percentage of illiteracy on the eve of the War was still extraordinarily high. We know that only a small percentage of Russian children went to school. A still smaller portion had received any scholastic training in the

and the maintenance of primary schools requires a high level of labour productivity. This explains why German attempts to realize compulsory education during the seventeenth and eighteenth century failed. – Joachim Lohmann, “Die Entwicklung der Halb- und Ganztagschule”, *Paedagogica Historica*, VII (1967), pp. 133-134, and Karl-Heinz Günther *et al.*, *Geschichte der Erziehung*, 11th Ed. (Berlin, 1972), pp. 140-141.

³⁰ An analysis of causes in Peter Flora, “Die Bildungsentwicklung im Prozess der Staaten- und Nationenbildung”, in Peter Christian Ludz (ed.), *Soziologie und Sozialgeschichte* [= Sonderheft 16 of the *Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialgeschichte*], 1972.

³¹ All German states had an eight-year period of compulsory education (6 to 14 age group), except Bavaria and Württemberg (7 to 14 age group).

³² Peter Flora, *Indikatoren der Modernisierung. Ein historisches Datenhandbuch* (Opladen, 1975), p. 73.

³³ Dina Bertoni Jovine, *Storia dell'educazione popolare in Italia* (Bari, 1965), pp. 148-167, 199-214.

³⁴ Michael Kaser, “Education in Tsarist and Soviet Development”, in C. Abramsky and Beryl J. Williams (eds), *Essays in Honour of E.H. Carr* (London and Basingstoke, 1974), pp. 235-236.

³⁵ Marzio Barbagli, *Educating for Unemployment. Politics, Labor Markets, and the School System – Italy, 1859-1973*. Translated by Robert H. Ross (New York, 1982), p. 75.

past, with the result that it seems doubtful whether the general average of literacy was more than 20 or 25 per cent. One should remember that even among those children who went to school many never saw a newspaper or book in later years, and their knowledge of even the rudiments of reading and writing therefore was purely nominal.³⁶

The situation among industrial workers, however, was better than among the population at large: in 1918 the rate of literacy in this group was 80.3 per cent for men and 48.2 per cent for women.³⁷

The political effects of schooling were not unambiguous. The ruling classes were aware of this, as is shown by their controversies on the matter.³⁸ In the long run the advocates of compulsory education won the debate everywhere, if only because modern state-bureaucracies and developed capitalist economies need educated and literate peasants and workers. In order to suppress from the beginning any subversive influences education might exert the children were thoroughly indoctrinated with "patriotic" values.³⁹ In some countries this indoctrination was accompanied by the continuous transfer of religious thoughts, but in countries where the church was an independent hierarchy next to the state apparatus conflicts often arose about the influence of each in primary schools.⁴⁰ In all cases the children were combined in gigantic classes (often consisting of seventy, and sometimes even of 120 pupils), and got used to mechanical obedience everyday.⁴¹ In Britain schools even introduced regular drill-exercises, be-

³⁶ Florinsky (1931), quoted in William H.E. Johnson, *Russia's Educational Heritage* (Pittsburgh, 1950), p. 197.

³⁷ A.M. Pankratova, *Istorija proletariata SSSR* (Moscow, 1935), p. 168. Not all these literate workers will have learned reading in "normal" schools. Many of them probably got lessons in factory schools, with the clergy or in military service.

³⁸ The following two contradictory quotes, from the Italian debate about 1840, may be considered typical:

* *Il vero amico del popolo*, a periodical of the Papal state, wrote in 1843: "If likewise one diffused education in minute proportions, it would inevitably happen that the people would lose their primitive ingenuity and simplicity, they would become estranged from their traditions, and they would no longer love the force of authority above all else; it is of little use to teach the people to read and write, and it can bring grievous results."

* A memorandum addressed to the Grand Duke of Tuscany declared in 1838: "Where there is more education for the masses, the People are better-mannered, they carry out the laws that civil society constitutes and preserves, appreciating their advantages and recognizing the necessity of constraint." – Quotes from Barbagli, *Educating for Unemployment*, pp. 51-52.

³⁹ See, for instance, Jacques Ozouf and Mona Ozouf, "Le thème du Patriotisme dans les manuels primaires", *Mouvement Social*, no 49 (1964); H. Lemmermann, *Kriegserziehung im Kaiserreich. Studien zur politischen Funktion von Schule und Schulmusik 1890-1918* (Lilienthal and Bremen, 1984).

⁴⁰ This can be seen in Italy: Simonetta Soldani, "The Conflict between Church and State in Italy on Primary Education in the Period Following Unification", in Willem Frijhoff (ed.), *L'Offre d'Ecole* (Paris, 1983).

⁴¹ See, for instance, Peter Gstettner, *Die Eroberung des Kindes durch die Wissenschaft. Aus der Geschichte der Disziplinierung* (Reinbek, 1981), esp. pp. 43-89.

cause this would promote the discipline and health of the children and would meet the needs of the military.⁴² From the (limited) literature on the subject one gets the impression that working-class parents were not eager to send their children to school because they disliked to surrender control over their offspring. In time, compulsory education was established everywhere and the resistance to it was replaced by resignation. A British headmaster, comparing 1882 with 1900, wrote: “*Parents in relation to teachers: Much more friendly; hostility, insolence, violence or threats, common in 1882, now hardly ever occur.*”⁴³

While the parents adjusted themselves to the new system the children were to a certain extent indoctrinated with dominant values. It thus seems plausible that primary education did play a part in working-class integration, although the exact measure of influence it exerted remains unclear. The indoctrinating effects of compulsory education must have been strongest in Germany, France and Great Britain, and weaker in Italy and Russia.

V. *Suffrage*. Therborn has convincingly shown that “the fight of the working class for universal suffrage and freely elected government was never by itself sufficient to enforce the introduction of bourgeois democracy.”⁴⁴ Other factors had to play a supporting role, like mobilization for war or democratic pressure by agrarian petty landowners. These pressures forced the ruling classes to make concessions in a parliamentary direction. But it was only with many hesitations that they extended suffrage. Moorhouse has given a useful description of this process for the British case:

Political integration was essentially a ruling class problem in the formation and maintenance of legitimacy but not in the way usually presented. For it was not simply a question of the legitimation of democracy as a political system but rather the legitimation of a “democratic” system whose leaders and range of concern could remain substantially unchanged from those of a “pre-democratic” era. The majority of the ruling class believed that incorporation was necessary to bind the masses to the prevailing system but also wanted such integration to be constrained and channelled so that, though institutional forms might change, and could be promoted as having

⁴² J.S. Hurt, “Drill, Discipline, and the Elementary School Ethos”, in Phillip McCann (ed.), *Popular Education and Socialization in the Nineteenth Century* (London, 1977), p. 170.

⁴³ Booth, *Life and Labour*, series 3, vol. 4, p. 202. Quoted in Gareth Stedman Jones, *Languages of Class. Studies in English working class history 1832-1982* (Cambridge, 1983), p. 222. Jones in this connection refers to the demobilizing, “deadening effects of elementary education”.

⁴⁴ Göran Therborn, “The Rule of Capital and the Rise of Democracy”, *New Left Review*, no 103 (1977), pp. 30-31.

changed, the differential distribution of power in society would be unaltered.⁴⁵

It would lead us too far to reconstruct the precise elements that brought about the uneven extension of suffrage in the five countries during the period under consideration. Suffice it to observe that the stable political structure of Great Britain allowed for a relatively slow extension; the number of men⁴⁶ entitled to vote remained around thirty-five per cent until the early 1880's, then increased drastically and kept fluctuating around 62 or 63 per cent. In France and Germany these percentages were higher; in both countries they fluctuated around ninety per cent (Table 3).

Italy and Russia form a remarkable contrast. After unification Italy for a long time had a very small percentage of men entitled to vote, until the liberal Giolitti-government as part of its campaign for support of the Libyan war extended the percentage in 1912 in one stroke to more than ninety. In Russia things were even more difficult. The Duma, installed in 1905 per Imperial Decree on a broad franchise, began to work in May 1906 but was dissolved in July of the same year. The second Duma ended in a similar way in 1907. In June of that year the franchise was narrowed, and the third and fourth Duma (1907-12 and 1912-17) were considerably less representative. Hence, in Italy as well as in Russia the working class had only a very limited experience with indirect democracy in 1914.

An extended, durable, franchise meant the partial political recognition of workers as full-fledged citizens and thus may have promoted working-class integration. For the notion of a national community in which all those who contribute to welfare and prosperity are entitled to a respectable status – the idea of a “national reciprocity of rights and obligations” (Bendix) – is strongly supported.

Simultaneously, an extended franchise furthered the growth and consolidation of working-class parties with radical socialist platforms, as is indicated by table 4.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ H.F. Moorhouse, “The Political Incorporation of the British Working Class: An Interpretation”, *Sociology*, 7 (1973), p. 346.

⁴⁶ Naturally, I am fully aware of the fact that female suffrage was established much later. However, considering the fact that classes are structured along patriarchal family lines the extent of male suffrage might be considered as a first approximation of working-class involvement in parliamentary processes.

⁴⁷ Table 4 gives the Social Democratic vote as a percentage of the *total electorate*, and not (as is more usual) as a percentage of the *valid votes*. This is done because in my opinion the first percentage gives a better impression of socialist influence than the second.

Table 3: Men entitled to vote as percentage of male age group defined by electoral law

	France	Germany	Italy	Britain
1870			8.3	
1871	95.4	81.2		32.7
1874		89.4	8.4	
1876	85.1		8.8	
1877	84.0	90.7		
1878		91.9		
1880			8.9	
1881	81.9	89.3		35.9
1882			25.1	
1883				36.0
1884		90.6		
1885	81.0			63.9
1886			29.9	63.3
1887		91.8		
1889	83.6			62.8
1890		92.0	33.5	
1892			35.4	63.6
1893	86.1	93.5		
1895			25.4	62.8
1897			25.2	
1898	88.4	93.5		
1900			26.5	62.7
1902	91.4			
1903		93.7		
1904			29.3	
1906	92.8			62.3
1907		93.2		
1909			32.7	
1910	90.9			62.6
1912		93.3		
1913			[90.8]	

Source: Jürgen Kohl, "Zur langfristigen Entwicklung der politischen Partizipation in Westeuropa", in Otto Büsch and Peter Steinbach (eds), *Vergleichende Europäische Wahlgeschichte* (Berlin, 1983), p. 410.

Table 4: Social Democratic votes as percentage of total electorate

	Germany	Italy	Britain	France
1871	1.6			
1874	4.1			
1877	5.5			
1878	4.8			
1881	3.4			
1884	5.9			
1887	7.8			
1890	14.1			
1893	16.8			
1895		3.9		
1897		5.1		
1898	18.4			
1900		7.3	0.9	
1903	24.0			
1904		12.8		
1906			4.4	7.7
1907	24.4			
1909		11.9		
1910			4.8*	
1912	29.4			
1913		13.6* *		
1914				12.4

* In 1910 two elections took place in Britain: one in January (the Labour Party got 6.6% of the votes of the total electorate at that time) and one in December (4.8%).

** This is the sum of the percentages of the Socialist Party, the Independent Socialists and the Reformist Socialists.

Source: Calculation by the author.

This electoral growth in itself may have promoted integration, as Abendroth assumed.⁴⁸ But here we should remember that the importance of parliaments was not the same everywhere. In Great Britain, France and Italy parliamentary authority was relatively great; but the *Reichstag* and the *Duma* were only quasi-parliaments. In Germany and Russia Social Demo-

⁴⁸ Referring to the collapse of the Second International Abendroth wrote: "Die sozialistischen Parteien, die noch nicht zu grossen, seit langem legalen Massenparteien geworden waren, blieben also im allgemeinen kriegsfeindlich, während die institutionalisierten Massenparteien sich nach dem Ausbruch des Ersten Weltkrieges fast ausnahmslos der Kriegspolitik ihrer Regierungen unterwarfen." – Wolfgang Abendroth, *Sozialgeschichte der europäischen Arbeiterbewegung*, 7th Ed. (Frankfurt, 1970), p. 83.

cratic parties had no real political influence, even if they had a large parliamentary representation, as in Germany.

VI. *Armies* played an important role in the process of working-class integration in two ways. Firstly through the direct consequences of military service and secondly through general societal influences exerted by the apparatuses of violence.⁴⁹

(i) After the French defeat in 1871 the Prussian system of military recruitment (general two-years compulsory conscription combined with one-year volunteers) was adopted by almost all Continental powers. The precise terms were modified: Italy knew a compulsory service of three years (from 1875), just like France from 1885-89 till 1905 (when the length of service was reduced to two years, only to be extended to three years again in 1913), while Russia kept its conscripts in the barracks for six years from 1874 onwards. Only Great Britain maintained the old organization. But in this country, too, workers came under military influence because the Volunteer Force, founded in 1859 for fear of a French invasion, attracted an increasing number of working-class men.

Naturally, the primary motive for Continental army reforms was of a military nature. Nevertheless, it is obvious that the ongoing stream of conscripts must have exerted an influence on the mentality of the population at large.⁵⁰ The effects of the army as an agency of socialization were contradictory. It is highly probable that the young soldiers experienced their term of service as a combination of horror and pleasure. Undoubtedly the draftees had negative feelings about their prolonged divorce from home and family; and the chicanery and lust of power of their officers must have cooled down their enthusiasm, if it ever existed. Conscripts, accused of insubordination, were punished severely in all armies. Sentences meted out varied from a blow in the face to a stay in prison.⁵¹ Occasionally the terror went further: in the Russian army – which normally did not treat its soldiers

⁴⁹ This distinction has been made in Morris Janowitz, *The Military in the Political Development of New Nations. An Essay in Comparative Analysis* (Chicago and London, 1964), pp. 81-82. Janowitz reduces the second aspect to “the symbolic value of the armed forces for the population as a whole”. However, I will argue that other secondary influences might have been relevant as well.

⁵⁰ Military sociologists differ in their opinion on the effects of military socialization, but all seem to agree that army life exerts a discernable influence. Compare the views in Hubert Treiber, *Wie man Soldaten macht. Sozialisation in kasernierter Vergesellschaftung* (Düsseldorf, 1973), and Albrecht Rothacher, “On the Effects and Noneffects of Military Socialization”, *Armed Forces and Society*, VI (1979-80), pp. 332-334.

⁵¹ Some comparative observations on corporal punishment in the German, Austrian and Russian armies can be found in Anton I. Denikin, *The career of a tsarist officer. Memoirs, 1872-1916*. An annotated translation from the Russian by Margaret Patoski (Minneapolis, 1975), pp. 82-83.

worse than others – a draftee could be whipped with birch rods in front of the entire unit.⁵²

But these negative aspects (and other hardships like the bad food, for instance) were at least partly counterbalanced by the companionship, the temporary liberation from the restriction of family life, and the impressive uniform. Some less obvious temptations of military service become visible when we look at the hundreds of thousands of British workers who joined the Volunteer Force: they were attracted by the recreational aspects, like rifle shooting and . . . drill exercises.⁵³

Especially at times when there was no clear threat of war and soldiers therefore did not have to fear for their lives the feeling of hatred against the army might have been weaker than the proudness of being “allowed to serve” – the more so if the term of service did not last too long. Additionally there was the indoctrinating effect of barrack life, which has been so ably described by Kiernan:

It is hard for the individual to go on feeling at odds with the life around him, and the more so when this is as close and all-enveloping as an army's; the most reluctant would be impelled to come to terms with it. He would learn to hug his chains [. . .]. If on common days of the week a man suffered from his army boots (which were playing havoc with Europe's feet), his easiest consolation was grumbling at the villainous foreigners whose fault it was that he had to go clumping around in them. Thus army life intensified that diversion of discontents outwards against foreign bogies that was so large a part of Europe's adaptation to this traumatic period of social transition. Altogether, the average individual would come out of it more firmly integrated in the national collective.⁵⁴

On the other hand armies – reflecting class cleavages in the antagonism between common soldiers and officers – could stimulate rebelliousness. French and German generals were not without reason afraid of socialist agitation.⁵⁵

The above-mentioned elements are to a certain extent the same for all countries (except Britain) because the internal structure of their armies was largely similar. The differences between them become visible when we take into account the diverging environments in which military organizations worked. Army leaders had the best chance to resist subversion if they were helped by national systems of education and (quasi-)representation. The

⁵² Anton I. Denikin, *Staraja Armija* (Paris, 1931), pp. 142-143.

⁵³ Hugh Cunningham, *The Volunteer Force. A Social and Political History 1859-1908* (London, 1975), pp. 103-126.

⁵⁴ Victor G. Kiernan, “Conscription and Society in Europe before the War of 1914-1918”, in M.R.D. Foot (ed.), *War and Society. Historical Essays in Honour and Memory of J. R. Western 1928-1971* (London, 1973), p. 156.

⁵⁵ Brian Bond, *War and Society in Europe 1870-1970* (London, 1986), p. 66.

less developed the civic feelings of the lower classes were, the stronger apathy and resistance in the army. Germany, certainly after 1871, knew a conscious commitment to military duty among broad layers of the population⁵⁶ – a fact surely connected with the well developed educational system, the existence of a (quasi)parliament and recent military successes. In Russia, on the other hand, the population was largely indifferent. The modernization of the tsarist army had always been “flawed”: the military apparatus was only an “institutional shell”, lacking “supportive institutions and attitudes of the society as a whole”.⁵⁷ In France and Italy the situation was a bit more complicated: in both countries a part of the population seems to have identified itself with the army, while particularly in the (southern) regions with autonomist tendencies the army was held in less esteem; attempts to escape from military service (through emigration, for instance) frequently occurred.⁵⁸

Summarizing we may suspect that compulsory military service stimulated working-class integration more in so far as (a) the chance of war seemed smaller, (b) the service was considered more as a duty for full-fledged citizens and (c) the army was held in higher esteem. This last point brings us to the second aspect.

(ii) The prestige enjoyed by armies has many sides. Firstly the military successes in confrontations with other armed forces are relevant. We may surmise that workers are less likely to identify themselves with armies going from defeat to defeat than with those winning one war after the other. The Russian army most certainly was not a “winner”; one only has to remember the Crimean War or the war with Japan. The Italian army was no more successful; it even proved itself incapable of winning a minor colonial war (battle of Adowa 1896). On the other hand, the British and German armies possessed the aura of victors. In France the image was less clear.

Secondly, the fiscal pressure exercised on the populace for military

⁵⁶ One example. Gestrinch shows in his monograph on the history of youth culture in the village of Ohmenhausen (Württemberg) how during the nineteenth century dislike of the army was replaced by enthusiasm. “Militärdienst wurde zur Ehrensache und in die gegenseitigen Abgrenzungsversuche der Jahrgänge eingebaut. Wer noch nicht Rekrut gewesen war, durfte auf der Strasse keine Soldatenlieder singen, ohne von den Älteren ‘die Gosch voll’ zu kriegen.” – Andreas Gestrinch, *Traditionelle Jugendkultur und Industrialisierung. Sozialgeschichte der Jugend in einer ländlichen Arbeitergemeinde Württembergs 1800-1920* (Göttingen, 1986), p. 124.

⁵⁷ Allen K. Wildman, *The End of the Russian Imperial Army. The Old Army and the Soldiers' Revolt (March-April 1917)* (Princeton, 1980), pp. 40-41. Compare Bond, *War and Society*, p. 68: Russia “could hardly attempt to introduce the more idealistic ‘civic’ aspects of the nation in arms when these principles had made such little headway in civil society.”

⁵⁸ John Whittam, *The Politics of the Italian Army 1861-1918* (London, 1977), p. 114, writes about a “large number of young men, especially in Sicily and the south, who evaded service.” For France see Roland Andréani, “L’Antimilitarisme en Languedoc Méditerranéen avant la Première Guerre Mondiale”, *Revue d’Histoire Moderne et Contemporaine*, 20 (1973).

Table 5: Military appropriations per capita of population (US \$)

	1880	1890	1900	1910	1914
Great Britain	3.60	4.03	6.17	7.56	8.53
Germany	2.27	2.95	3.64	4.17	8.52
France	4.22	4.87	5.41	6.70	7.33
Italy	1.80	2.63	2.44	3.50	3.81
Russia	1.59	1.32	1.53	1.91	2.58

Source: Quincy Wright, *A Study of War*, 2nd Ed. (Chicago and London, 1965), pp. 670-671.

reasons is of importance. The arms race during the last decades before the First World War caused an increase in military expenditure per capita in all countries (Table 5).

This may have promoted discontent with the military. The fact that Social Democrats in several countries used the item in their propaganda gives some credibility to this assumption.

Thirdly, use of armies for internal repression should be considered. In all countries military interventions against strikes, riots, etc., to support local authorities in maintaining law and order, were normal experiences.⁵⁹ Dislike of the army was strongly stimulated by this in the more or less militant working-class milieux. However, those parts of the working class that had not directly or indirectly experienced military aggression were, of course, less sensitive in this respect.

While the prestige of the army may thus have furthered integration in Germany and Britain (and perhaps in France also), fiscal pressures and strike-breaking will have hampered integration in all countries.

VII. The “take-off” of the *modern welfare state* took place during the last two decades of the nineteenth century. The core of all social insurance systems consists of four elements: accident, sickness, old-age and unemployment insurance. Although no particular order can be found in the introduction of these elements, accident insurance normally came first and unemployment insurance last.⁶⁰ A sample of data giving the percentage of

⁵⁹ The research in this area is not very well developed. But see e.g., Ferdinando Cordova, *Democrazia e repressione nell'Italia di fine secolo* (Rome, 1983); Dieter Fricke, “Zur Rolle des Militarismus nach innen in Deutschland vor dem ersten Weltkrieg”, *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft*, 6 (1958); Roger Geary, *Policing Industrial Disputes 1893 to 1985* (Cambridge, 1985), pp. 16-25.

⁶⁰ “This sequence may tentatively be explained by the degree to which the introduction of each system represented a break with the liberal ideas concerning the assignment of guilt and

Table 6: Percentage of working population covered by social insurance

		Germany	France	Italy	Britain
1885	A	17	—	—	—
	S	22	—	—	—
	O	—	—	—	—
	U	—	—	—	—
1890	A	66	—	—	—
	S	32	—	(6)	—
	O	—	—	—	—
	U	—	—	—	—
1895	A	76	—	—	—
	S	34	—	6*	—
	O	54	—	—	—
	U	—	—	—	—
1900	A	71	10	(5)	39
	S	39	9	(6)	—
	O	53	(8)	0	—
	U	—	—	—	—
1905	A	69	13	9	37
	S	41	13	6	—
	O	51	*8	1	—
	U	—	0	—	—
1910	A	81	20 (e)	*11	70
	S	44	18	(6)	—
	O	53	**13	(2)	—
	U	—	0	—	—
1915	A	71	20 (e)	(11)	68*
	S	43	15*	(6)	66*
	O	57	11*	2 (e)	—
	U	—	0	—	11*

A = accident insurance; S = sickness insurance; O = old-age insurance; U = unemployment insurance.

() = partial estimation; (e) = rough estimation; N* = figure of year before; *N = figure of year after; **N = figure of two years after.

Source: Tables A3, A4, A5, and A6 in Jens Alber, *Vom Armenhaus zum Wohlfahrtsstaat* (Frankfurt and New York, 1982).

the working populations covered by insurance schemes until the Great War is summarized in Table 6.

It is evident that Germany was the leader in this field, that Britain was a good follower as to accident insurance, and that France and Italy remained far behind.⁶¹ I do not know comparable Russian figures, but it seems plausible that the situation in that country was not much better than it was in Italy. Before 1914 Russia had only three insurance arrangements:

* The oldest arrangement, introduced in 1861 but only put into practice in 1893, covered work-related illnesses, injuries, and deaths to workers in mining, the railroads, and the Navy Department. In 1910 about 22,000 people were covered by this regulation.

* The accident-and-death compensation law of 1903 which covered workers in factories, mines and foundries, and which was subsequently extended to government employees, was no more impressive: "It did not [. . .] introduce compulsory insurance and was weak from many other points of view: employers, individually accountable, frequently could not or would not pay claims; benefits were denied on grounds of negligence by the worker; administration was entirely in the hands of employers and officials."

* The Health and Accident Act of 1912, which covered workers and employees in manufacturing, mining etc., applied to 23 per cent of the labour force in these sectors.⁶²

One can discern two approaches to the introduction of social insurance systems. In a number of countries welfare programs were introduced with the intention of suppressing social and political unrest and of taking the wind out of the labour movement's sails. This we may call the Heavy Hand approach. In a number of other cases welfare programs were introduced as a Helping Hand, that is as an attempt to support working-class self-help and

responsibility among liberals, groups, and the state. [. . .] The introduction of accident insurance or workmen's compensation constituted the least radical break with liberalism since it could be rationalized by redefining the old idea of liability for individually caused damages. [. . .] Unemployment insurance was usually introduced last because the notion of state support for the 'undeserving poor' required the most radical break with liberal and patrimonial principles." – Peter Flora and Jens Alber, "Modernization, Democratization, and the Development of Welfare States in Western Europe", in Peter Flora and Arnold J. Heidenheimer (eds), *The Development of Welfare States in Europe and America* (New Brunswick and London, 1981), pp. 50-52.

⁶¹ Hatzfeld tried to explain the slowness of French insurance development by referring to the small economic growth rates, which implied that the unemployment problem never became as urgent as it was in the neighbouring countries. – Henri Hatzfeld, *Du paupérisme à la sécurité sociale 1850-1940. Essai sur les origines de la sécurité sociale en France* (Paris, 1971), p. 47.

⁶² Bernice Madison, "The Organization of Welfare Service", in Cyril E. Black (ed.), *The Transformation of Russian Society. Aspects of Social Change since 1861* (Cambridge, Mass., 1960), pp. 520-521.

in that way to integrate organized labour.⁶³

The Russian case is a clear example of a belated and largely failed attempt to apply the Heavy Hand approach. A quote from a confidential circular by the minister of the interior, N.A. Maklakov, referring to the Health and Accident Act (1912) just mentioned, may illustrate this:

Labour legislation with us is quite a new phenomenon without historical precedent, and the working classes are very much under the influence of revolutionary parties who exploit them in their own interests. But the working classes have realized from previous experience that the main burden of strikes falls on their own shoulders, and have ceased to believe in revolutionary slogans. The present moment is therefore very opportune for *withholding the working masses from revolutionary activity by introducing insurance legislation* [. . .].⁶⁴

The contrast between Heavy and Helping Hand is most clearly visible if we compare the two leading social-insurance states, Germany and Britain. Ritter has made a systematic comparison and found the following differences: the SPD was considered as a revolutionary threat while Labour was not; therefore, the German government primarily wanted to reduce Social Democratic influence in the working class, while the British government did not; hence, the target groups and functioning of social laws in both countries diverged. In Germany social insurance was primarily meant to cover skilled workers, the most important part of the social base of the SPD and the Free Trade Unions. British social policy was a sharp contrast to that in Germany, at least until the National Insurance Act of 1911. It was meant to protect the most destitute – children and workers unable to organize the effective representation of their interests. In Germany the trade unions were ignored as regards the administration of insurance, in so far as this was possible. In Britain the Friendly Societies were aided in their attempts to establish insurance. In Germany, according to the principle of *divide et impera*, white-collar workers received a separate pension insurance, in Britain they did not.⁶⁵

The French and Italian cases bear a certain resemblance to the British case. In both countries the early social insurance legislation tried to bind the existing mutual aid societies (*société de secours mutuel*, *società di mutuo soccorso*) to the state apparatus.⁶⁶

⁶³ The concepts of the Heavy and Helping Hand approaches are explored more fully in Sandra K. Schneider, "The Sequential Development of Social Programs in Eighteen Welfare States", *Comparative Social Research*, 5 (1982).

⁶⁴ Quoted from Tony Cliff, *Lenin*, vol. I (London, 1975), p. 332. My emphasis – MvdL.

⁶⁵ Gerhard A. Ritter, *Social Welfare in Germany and Britain. Origins and Development*. Translated by Kim Traynor (Leamington Spa and New York, 1986), pp. 180-181.

⁶⁶ Hatzfeld, *Du Paupérisme*, especially pp. 190-261; Volker Sellin, *Die Anfänge staatlicher Sozialreform im liberalen Italien* (Stuttgart, 1971), pp. 138-154.

In what measure did social legislation (either from a Helping Hand or from a Heavy Hand perspective) contribute to the integration of working classes? In all countries there was a deep-rooted working-class suspicion against the new form of state intervention. That explains why the Helping Hand approach in the beginning met with little success. In Britain as well as in France and Italy many workers preferred to join autonomous organizations of self-help and felt no inclination to be in a state harness, because protection from above was associated with the acceptance of the “traditional tutelage of the lower classes”.⁶⁷ One example may illustrate this: on 15 April 1886 the Italian Law number 3818 was accepted by parliament. This offered the *società di mutuo soccorso* legal recognition and, thus, certain financial advantages. But on 31 December 1894 only 23.7 per cent of all mutual aid societies had made use of this opportunity.⁶⁸

In countries where the Heavy Hand approach dominated (Germany, Russia) social insurance also does not seem to have made a substantial *direct* contribution to working-class integration. In Russia this is rather self-evident because social legislation as such was not very impressive. But the primary aim of weakening the labour movement was not attained. On the contrary, the Russian health and accident insurance system of 1912 *promoted* organized labour:

At the time, the Russian labor movement had been driven underground. Nation-wide trade unions did not exist at all. The few local unions that there were had a total membership of scarcely more than 20,000-30,000 throughout the country. The establishment of a system of health insurance (however limited) of self-administration by the insured, gave the labor movement an outlet for some of its energies. Thus there arose a new type of labor movement, the so-called workers' insurance movement, which aimed at improving and extending self-administration by the insured. In a few years large numbers of talented organizers and labor leaders made their appearance.⁶⁹

In Germany the situation was to a certain extent similar; here, too, the Social Democratic labour movement got a strong impulse from social insurance institutions. But in this case the permanent collaboration with members of other social classes in the management of funds might have

⁶⁷ Gaston V. Rimlinger, *Welfare Policy and Industrialization in Europe, America, and Russia* (New York, 1971), p. 336.

⁶⁸ Thomas Simons, “Einführung in das Recht der sozialen Sicherheit von Italien”, in Gerhard Igl *et al.*, *Einführung in das Recht der sozialen Sicherheit von Frankreich, Grossbritannien und Italien* [= *Vierteljahresschrift für Sozialrecht*, Beiheft 1] 1977, p. 353; Sellin, *Anfänge*, pp. 153-154. On the distrust of British workers: Henry Pelling, “The Working Class and the Origins of the Welfare State”, in *Popular Politics and Society in Late Victorian Britain*, 2nd ed. (London, 1979); on the distrust of French workers: Hatzfeld, *Du Paupérisme*, pp. 185-261.

⁶⁹ Solomon M. Schwarz, *Labor in the Soviet Union* (New York, 1951), p. 338. See also Cliff, *Lenin*, pp. 332-337.

promoted integration: “This process did not take place, as Bismarck had wished, by bringing about the workers’ alienation from their own organisations. In fact, it came about precisely through their own organisations.”⁷⁰ Besides, one may suspect that old-age insurance – which was only important in Germany (Table 6) – stimulated integration to a certain extent. Perhaps Bismarck was right when he said that a state pension, however small it may be, gives people “a vested interest in the state”.⁷¹

In sum, it seems that only in Germany social insurance had some integrating effect.

The list of causal factors mentioned in the foregoing is certainly not comprehensive. One might think of other explanatory variables like, for instance, the role of churches, of languages or the invention of “mass-producing traditions” (Hobsbawm). But even our limited sample of potential causes makes it possible to formulate two preliminary conclusions.

Firstly, there is a *methodological* insight to gain. Our incomplete inventory allows us to establish the fact that many variables are fundamentally *ambiguous* and in themselves cannot offer an explanation because they may hamper as well as further working-class integration. Take for instance the rate of literacy. If workers are able to read they may take note of subversive as well as nationalist papers and books. Which of both alternatives eventually will dominate depends on other variables like the strength and radicalism of organized labour, the performance of state authorities etc. Something similar could be said about factors like (male) suffrage or compulsory military service. Besides, many factors are *multi-faceted* and may therefore simultaneously exert influences in different directions. A strong and successful army, for example, implies high fiscal pressure as well as national prestige. Which of the influences is stronger will, again, depend on other variables.

Both the ambiguity and the contradictory effects of variables indicate not only that mono-causal explanations can offer no solution,⁷² but also that every single variable should always be considered in conjunction with at least some of the other variables. Simple cause-consequence patterns, which have proved their analytical usefulness in situations of relatively low complexity seem to be deficient in our case. For the essence of these patterns lies in their bi- or multi-variate connections, in which *independent* variables, perhaps via *intermediate* variables, explain a *dependent* variable. Although in the case of working-class integration this kind of relationship can be used now and again, it is probably of almost no help in a comparative

⁷⁰ Ritter, *Social Welfare*, p. 79.

⁷¹ Quote from 1889 in Ritter, *Social Welfare*, p. 35.

⁷² A fact already pointed out in Annie Kriegel, *Le pain et les roses. Jalons pour une histoire des socialismes* (Paris, 1968), p. 129.

analysis such as we are confronted with here. Many different interdependencies may occur, without a general causal sequence between these variables.⁷³ This insight coincides with a conclusion reached by social scientists studying problems of similar complexity (e.g., the present arms race or the (under)development of national economies); therefore, these scholars sometimes use the concept of a *causal configuration*, which means that there exists an interdependent totality of variables without generally valid explanatory values.⁷⁴

Secondly, we can say at least something about the initial question of the diverging degrees of working-class integration in the five countries we have investigated. From the survey presented it seems reasonable to assume (though with many reservations) that indeed there did exist a qualitative difference between Britain, Germany and France on the one hand and Italy and Russia on the other. If we set aside all factors working in the same direction in all countries (e.g. the lack of integration at the consumption level) and if we keep in mind the things just said about the problem of the causal configuration we may – quite provisionally – come to the conclusion that there is a certain clustering of integration-promoting factors in Britain, Germany and France, which is to a certain extent lacking in Italy and Russia. Let's summarize some of our results in a dichotomous and extremely schematic fashion:

Britain, Germany, France	Italy, Russia
* Industrialized before 1914	* Industrial "take-off"
* Highly developed system of transport and communications	* Less developed system of transport and communications
* Highly developed system of primary education	* Less developed system of primary education
* (Male) electorate is relatively large part of (male) population	* (Male) electorate is relatively small part of (male) population [in Italy until 1912]
* Universal conscription (except in Britain) combined with general education and large electorate	* Universal conscription not combined with general education and large electorate
* Army prestigious	* Army not prestigious

⁷³ According to Ragin "a synthetic [comparative] strategy should embody as much of the strict comparative logic of experimental design as possible. This logic is a key feature of case-oriented comparative study. It is apparent in this strategy's concern for combinations of conditions and in its allowance for complex, conjunctural causation. According to the meta-theory of this strategy, social causes often modify the effects of other causes, sometimes mutating and transforming their impact. Such causal complexity cannot be captured easily in

This outline neglects some factors like “national prestige” which was less important in Italy than it was in Russia. But then we should remember that the working-class perception of the Russian prestige was hampered by the partial absence of transport, media and literacy in this country (another example of the interdependency of variables).

If my preliminary analysis contains more than one grain of truth, then some doubt is cast on the comparative value of the theory of “negative integration”. For, according to its developer Guenther Roth, Imperial Germany, Italy before the First World War and the French Third Republic were all examples of partial (negative) working-class integration, while Britain would have known “a far-reaching integration of the lower classes into the national community” and Russia would have attempted a “complete subordination of the masses”.⁷⁵ Our overview, however, suggests, (i) that in no country working-class integration went as far as Roth suggests (because even in Britain several counter-influences were effective), and (ii) that the degree of working-class integration in the three cases of “negative integration” differed remarkably.

Let me conclude with two short remarks, in order to avoid misunderstandings. Firstly, I would like to stress that my analysis of working-class integration is concerned with medium-term structural developments and that no precipitate conclusions can be drawn from it as to “August 1914”. There exists no unique correspondence between “national integration” and “war enthusiasm”. Of course, workers applauding belligerent armies are proof of the non-existence of a coherent proletarian internationalism; but not every war-enthusiastic worker is therefore necessarily nationally integrated; other factors may play a role in his or her mind like, for instance, the chance to visit foreign countries or the temporary end to the monotony of everyday life.⁷⁶

Secondly, my analysis does not imply that the process of working-class integration is irreversible. The further developments during the years 1914-18 show very clearly that even high levels of integration could be reversed.

statistical analyses, especially in additive models.” – Charles C. Ragin, *The Comparative Method. Moving Beyond Qualitative and Quantitative Strategies* (Berkeley etc., 1987), pp. 82-83.

⁷⁴ The concept was perhaps for the first time introduced in Dieter Senghaas, *Aufrüstung durch Rüstungskontrolle. Über den symbolischen Gebrauch von Gewalt* (Stuttgart, 1972), pp. 81-86.

⁷⁵ Guenther Roth, *The Social Democrats in Imperial Germany. A Study in Working-Class Isolation and National Integration* (Totowa, 1963), pp. 7-8.

⁷⁶ These factors are mentioned in Leon Trotsky, *My Life. An Attempt at an Autobiography* (Harmondsworth, 1975), pp. 240-241, and in Hans-Joachim Bieber, *Gewerkschaften in Krieg und Revolution. Arbeiterbewegung, Industrie, Staat und Militär in Deutschland 1914-1920*, vol. I (Hamburg, 1981), pp. 81-82.